

In the Claims

Please cancel claim 1 without prejudice. Please amend claims 2 through 18 and add new claim 19 as indicated in the attached Claims Listing.

A complete Claims Listing showing all claims presently in the application and indicating the present status of each pending claim, is attached as required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c).

Claims:

1. (Cancelled).
2. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim [[1]] 19, wherein at least one of said supporting elements has a mounting flange and at least one of said connections [between the structural elements said supporting elements and said associated] comprises a layer of adhesive between said structural element and said mounting flange [are effected essentially by means of adhesive surfaces].
3. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim [[1]] 19, wherein said structural elements are made of materials to which the group comprising glass, ceramic and glass ceramic belongs.
4. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim [[1]] 19, wherein said supporting elements comprise a metal supporting element.
5. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim [[1]] 19, wherein said plurality of supporting elements comprises at least three supporting elements, distributed [[over]] about the periphery[, act on] of said structural element.
6. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim 5, [wherein said supporting elements act on] wherein said housing comprises an at least approximately centrally arranged structure reinforcing plate.
7. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim [[1]] 19, wherein said supporting elements each have an at least approximately an [L-shape] L-shaped portion and AN adjoining [with a] mounting flange.
8. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim 7, wherein said [associated] L-shaped portion has a horizontal leg and a vertical leg and wherein said

structural element [lies on a] is supported upon said horizontal leg of said [L-shape] L-shaped portion and [in that the] said vertical leg of [the L-shape] said L-shaped portion lies [against] facing the external periphery of said structural element, said mounting flange adjoining [[the]] said vertical leg of the L-shape in at least approximately the horizontal direction.

9. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim 8, wherein adhesive surfaces are arranged between [said two legs of the L-shape of said supporting element and] said [associated] structural element and said vertical leg of said supporting element and between said structural element and said horizontal leg of said supporting element.

10. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim 7, wherein said structural element is[, in the region of the horizontal leg of the L-shape,] provided with a through-bore, through which a prestressed screw is passed and connected to the horizontal leg of the L-shape.

11. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim 7, wherein said structural element is[, in the region of said vertical leg of the L-shape,] provided with a through-bore, through which a prestressed screw [is passed and by means of which] passes and connects said vertical leg [of the L-shape is connected] to said structural element.

12. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim [[1]] 19, wherein said supporting elements each have a [U-shape seen in] a portion of substantially U-shaped cross section, from which said mounting flange branches off, said substantially U-shaped portion having two mutually spaced legs between which said [associated] structural element [being] is received [between said two U-legs].

13. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim 12, wherein said substantially U-shaped portion of said structural element is provided with a through-bore, through which a screw is passed, which is connected to said two [[U-]]legs of said supporting element in such a way that [[the]] said two [[U-]]legs exert a prestressing force on said structural element.

14. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim [[1]] 19, wherein said supporting element comprises two mutually spaced clamping plates [arranged at a distance from one another,] between which said [associated] structural element is received, a peripheral plate running parallel to [the] an outer wall of said structural element, and a mounting flange connected to said two clamping plates and said peripheral plate.

15. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim 14, wherein said mounting flange has a portion having an at least approximately [a T-shape, one T-leg forming said mounting flange, and] T-shaped cross section and has connecting elements[[,]] connecting said two clamping plates and said peripheral plate to said mounting flange, [being arranged on a leg arranged at right angles to the said leg] said at least approximately T-shaped portion having a first leg which serves as a mounting plate for mounting said mounting flange upon said supporting structure and also has a second leg oriented perpendicular to said first leg, said connecting element being connected to said second leg of said at least approximately T-shaped portion.

16. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim 15, wherein said connecting elements [are designed as] comprise screws [[with]] and spring elements placing said screws under prestress.

17. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim 14, [wherein] further comprising at least one adhesive [surfaces are arranged] layer disposed between

each of said clamping plates and said structural element and between said peripheral plates and said structural element.

18. (Currently Amended) [Housing] A structure according to Claim [[14]] 17, wherein said two clamping plates are provided with screws, which are screwed into said structural element in such a way that a prestress is exerted on said at least one adhesive [surfaces] layer.

19. (New) A structure for use in a projection exposure system of the type used for manufacturing semiconductors, said structure comprising:

a projection lens assembly which includes a housing and a plurality of optical elements mounted in said housing for imaging a mask onto a semiconductor substrate, said housing having at least one structural element,

a supporting structure for supporting said projection lens assembly and bearing the weight said projection lens assembly, said weight of said projection lens assembly including at least the combined weight of said housing and said plurality of optical elements, and

a plurality of supporting elements, each respective one of which forms part of a respective one of a plurality of connections through which said housing is connected to said supporting structure and through which said weight of said projection lens is transferred to said supporting structure in such a way that supporting forces generated by said supporting structure as a result of said transfer of said weight of said projection lens assembly are taken up by a pressure force and a shear force which act on at least one of said supporting elements.